



**Connecticut Department of Public Health**

**Testimony Presented Before the Environment Committee**

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**Senate Bill 837, An Act Concerning The Use of Perfluoroalkyl or Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Class B Firefighting Foam**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information regarding Senate Bill 837, which prohibits the use of class B firefighting foam that contains an intentionally added perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) in any amount for training purposes; prohibits the use of Class B firefighting foam that contains an intentionally added PFAS in any amount after July 1, 2023 unless an alternative is not identified; and establishes a take back program for municipal sources of PFAS. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

PFAS, a class of more than 8,000 synthetic organic chemicals, have recently entered the national spotlight due to concerns about the potential risk they pose to human health and the environment. The existing body of scientific literature on PFAS, which has so far focused on a limited number of PFAS compounds, indicates that these compounds bioaccumulate in humans and animals and links them to human health effects ranging from developmental effects in fetuses and infants to certain forms of cancer.

DPH supports the restrictions on the use of class B firefighting foam with PFAS. Use of class B firefighting foam for training purposes is a known source of contamination of drinking water in this state and across the nation. DPH understands that training can be accomplished without the use of class B firefighting foam, thus it is reasonable to prohibit such training. DPH agrees that, prior to prohibiting the use of such class B firefighting foam with PFAS for flammable liquid fires, a suitable replacement be identified. As stated in the final PFAS Action Plan prepared by the Connecticut Interagency PFAS Task Force and submitted to Governor Lamont on November 1, 2019 (PFAS Action Plan), the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) have already done considerable work to identify suitable replacement foams. In addition, DEEP and DESPP have undertaken an inventory of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS stocked within state government and local fire departments, which is aiding in take-back efforts initiated by DEEP and DESPP in 2020. It is important to note that Class B firefighting foam with PFAS used at the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) airports must meet the requirements of the Federal Aviation

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Administration (FAA) and therefore it would be prudent to include a provision in Senate Bill # 837 to exempt CAA airports, until the FAA approves a perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) free alternative to Class B firefighting foam with PFAS. Such an exemption should also apply to any industry where federal law mandates the use of class B firefighting foam containing PFAS.

While subsections (a), (b) and (c) of this bill focus on the use of class B firefighting foam, subsection (d) includes language to develop for a take back program for municipal sources of PFAS but does not specify class B firefighting foam. Because PFAS are broadly used in all industrial categories and hundreds of consumer products, the Department respectfully recommends including language that more narrowly defines the intent of the take back program.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.